

We Don't Rest Well.

As a culture, as a church family, as individuals, we fill our lives with busyness. And in the brief moments we do find for rest, we often find that rest in something other than God, who alone is our refuge & rest. Instead we seek rest in TV, or in a pint of ice cream or a few pints of beer, or even in something outright sinful.

If this is you – and at least on some level, it's each of us – our lack of rest displays a mistrust of God: we don't believe that he's in control enough to turn off the iPhone. We don't believe he's a satisfying enough source of rest. We feel a constant need to please, and thus be with, people. We have idols of achievement, of busyness, of connectedness, of "always being on."

This Isn't Good. This Isn't Right. This Isn't Godly.

Throughout the Bible, God shows us a rhythm of work & rest; of going & stopping; of pouring out & being filled. This is the biblical concept of SABBATH.

Sabbath was set up by God, as a weekly day on which we cease from our labor, in order to rest & be refilled. God was the first to model Sabbath, "for in six days the LORD made heaven and earth, the sea, and all that is in them, and rested on the seventh day. Therefore the LORD blessed the Sabbath day and made it holy." (Exo 20:11). One of the ways that God created mankind to reflect him

was to follow our God: to regularly stop working, & to spend time resting, celebrating, & simply "being."

Jesus teaches that "the Sabbath was made for man, not man for the Sabbath" (Mark 2:27). This means we're free from a legalistic, regimented Sabbath of the Old Testament. But it also means that Sabbath is God's gift to us, & that it is good in God's eyes for his people to carve intentional, regular time into our lives, for worship, fun, & rest: giving up control, remembering we're not God, & showing ourselves the world an echo of the deep, eternal rest & satisfaction we have in Jesus.

So The City Church Carves Out Time For Sabbath.

To be clear, our periodic "Scattered Sabbaths" are certainly not a sufficient amount of rest! But our goal is to equip & model godly rest for our church family, communally & occasionally, so you can live it out on a more regular basis, personally & regularly. Instead of gathering to worship, we're going to worship through personal Sabbath. The back of this handout is designed to help you Sabbath well. It

gives practical ideas, some examples to get your mind on the right track, & even a few activities (or non-activities!) for you to do, as you rest and celebrate well. It's important to realize that everyone might Sabbath differently. Exercise might be work for someone, but joyful for another. Having people over might be draining for someone, but life-giving for another. The key is to free your schedule and tune in to God's leading for your time of rest. The ideas on the

back will simply help you empty yourself of your idols & self-sufficiency, & fill yourself with rest, celebration, & joy. If you have questions, post them in our online network, or ask one of our pastor-elders or your Village leader. And whatever you do – or don't do – as you Sabbath, Sabbath well. Worship. Celebrate. Enjoy. Play. Laugh. Breathe deeply. Dwell in Jesus. Be still, & know that God is God.

Prepare Yourself

We all know from experience that resting well isn't something we'll naturally fall into. It takes at least a little prep if we're carving out time for Sabbath. For you to truly rest, celebrate, & enjoy God, you need to make an effort to free your Sabbath time from distractions & the temptation to work, study, produce, achieve, & "do." Here are some things you might prayerfully consider, as you prepare well to Sabbath well:

- + Wrap up any work- or school-related activities before you begin, & put them away
- + Tidy up around the house: it doesn't have to be spotless, just non-distracting/non-tempting
- + Plan your meals: allow room for God the Spirit to lead your Sabbath, but if you need to pick up/prepare food, try to do so before you begin.

Things to Rest From...

Resting well means ceasing some normal activity. This displays a trust & reliance on God's protection & provision. Among other idols, Sabbath tests our idols of achievement, pride, & self-sufficiency. Consider resting from:

- + Anything associated with your job or school
- + Technology, news, & current events
- + Errands, bills, home projects, yard work, & housework
- + Involvement in teams you participate in or lead
- + Going to the gym, waking up early, or staying up too late
- + Worry, anxiety, control, etc, by praying & giving it to God

Things to Help You Rest...

One of the beautiful things about Sabbath is allowing God to revive & refill you. You might prayerfully consider some ways to dwell deeply in God and the gospel as you rest in Him:

- + Pray, read your Bible or a good book good music, and or a journal
- + Do a Sabbath devotional, posted for adults & kids at fwcitychurch.org (under "Resources," click "Sabbath")
- + Eat long meals with your family, or even with a few close friends
- + Take a walk, lay by the pool, take a nap, see a movie, or have a picnic
- + Have good conversation with those closest to you
- + Play with your kids, read them a book, or discuss & draw a Bible story

